

REMARKS

Applicant hereby submits a Request for Continued Examination (RCE), under 37 C.F.R. §1.114 for the above-referenced prior-filed non-provisional application and this Preliminary Amendment B.

Claims 1-45 and 56-58 are pending in the application. Claims 1-45 and 56-58 are rejected. Claims 20, 26 and 58 are currently amended. Claims 2, 3, 5-9, 12, 14, 15, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29 and 38-44 are original. Claims 1, 4, 10, 11, 13, 17-19, 23, 24, 27, 30-37 and 45 were previously amended. Claims 56 and 57 were previously added. Claims 46-55 were withdrawn as non-elected. Claim 16 was canceled.

Two [2] Declarations Under 37 CFR §1.131 and corresponding exhibits are herewith filed.

Claims 20 and 58 are rejected under 35 USC §112. Claims 20 and 58 are currently amended to overcome the rejections, and are hereby corrected for antecedent basis.

Claim 57 is rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,504, 546 (Cosatto et al.)

Claims 1-15, 17-45, 56 and 58 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,504, 546 (Cosatto et al.) and U.S. Patent No. 6,307,568 (Rom).

Applicant herewith submits a Declaration Under CFR 37 CFR §1.131 and corresponding exhibits, swearing behind U.S. Patent No. 6,504, 546 (Cosatto et al.) as prior art. Therefore, all bases of rejection or objection based upon Cosatto et al. alone or in combination are hereby traversed and overcome. It is also respectfully submitted that Examiner's rejections of Applicant's Claims, detailed in Examiner's remarks in the January 15, 2004 Office Action, are without technical merit and improper. However, in light of the fact that Cosatto et al. is not prior art, Applicant shall not herein continue to argue the lack of technical merits of Examiner's rejections as improper, but maintains this position for the record.

Applicant herewith submits a Declaration Under CFR 37 CFR §1.131 and corresponding exhibits, swearing behind U.S. Patent No. 6,307,568 (Rom) as prior art. Therefore, all bases of rejection or objection based upon Rom alone or in combination are hereby traversed and overcome. It is also respectfully submitted that Examiner's rejections of Applicant's Claims, detailed in Examiner's remarks in the January 15, 2004 Office Action, are without technical merit and improper. However, in light of the fact that Rom is not prior art, Applicant shall not

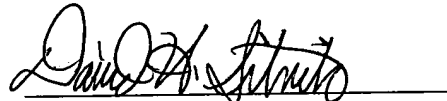
herein continue to argue the lack of technical merits of Examiner's rejections as improper, but maintains this position for the record.

This response is accompanied by the appropriate Request for Continued Examination (RCE) Transmittal authorizing the Commissioner to charge any additional fees and credit any overpayments during the pendency of this application to Sitrick & Sitrick's Deposit Account Number: 501166. The RCE fee and fees for filing two [2] Declarations Under CFR 37 CFR §1.131 are due and paid via the aforementioned fee transmittal.

All bases of rejection have been traversed and overcome by this Amendment B and Declarations Under CFR 37 CFR §1.131 herewith submitted. It is respectfully submitted that the present Application is in proper form for Allowance. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to directly communicate with the undersigned, if it will in any way facilitate the prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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